Silent night-Holy night

"Silent Night! Holy Night!
All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child,
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleeps in heavenly peace,
Sleeps in heavenly peace."

E.E.Slosson's The Chemistry of the Greatest Miracle in the Bible.

Text-Genesis 2:7 And God formed man out of the dust of the ground.

E.E.Slosson, editor of "Keeping up with Science" and a noted Chemist, also a Xn believer, uses his scientific knowledge with which to interpret the Bible. His"Sermons of a Chemist" fascinating.

The first sermon is entitled (as above stated) which I shall endeavor to reinterpret to you, tho it will lack the author's distinctive way of stating thots.

Slosson chose the particular miracle for three reasons:

1. Because of its remarkableness- the change from inanimate to living matter, the transformation of a clod of dirt to a living brain that can think and act!
Apparently on no other heavenly body has this miracle taken place.

2. It is a chemical miracle, of especial interest to a chemist. Just as much a chemical process as that Hydrogen and Oxigen unite to form water.

3. It is an indisputable miracle, recognized by all not only as having taken place but still takes place, for every living creature on earth comes from the earth.
This miracle cannot be explained but that it is a fact noone can deny.

This particular miracle is perhaps the most inexplainable of all miracles. All that is known concerning it is just a little about the way the process goes on, but the more we know about it the more marvelous and curious it becomes to us.
For example, the materials which go to make up our bodies are found in the soil, air and water, yet we are not able to make use of them directly. Every clod of dirt contains the elements of our bodies yet we cannot eat a clod of dirt, and if we did, we could not assimilate it for the building of our bodies.

One of the most important elements of the body is nitrogen, contained in our most expensive foods. Air is 4/5ths nitrogen. We breathe enough

nitwogen in one breath to supply our bodies with enough nitrogen to last us for hours, but as a fact we breathe it all out again, not using any of it!

We must get our nitrogen from plants, and plants get their nitrogen from the ground. We get all our bodily elements, except ogygen, from plants, and plants get theirs from the soil, hence, indirectly all the material of our bodies comes from the ground, except the ogygen.

Not only does this process of changing inanimate matter into flesh and blood and bone and nerve go on continually but the reverse process also takes place continually, the throwing off of living matter which goes back into the inamiate state. This reverse process is as great a miracle as the process of making living matter out of inamimate. In the midst of life we are in death.

The double miracle of death and resurrection is the regular rythm of life. Literally we die every few years hyst as compltely as we ever shall die. We are dying all the time, sometimes slowly, sometimes rapidly, but surely all the time. If we should, for a few moments cease to die, we would ceaseto live.

Suppose a miserly man should say, "What is the use of spending money for more food? I will simply keep what I have, for I am perfectly satisfied with it." The man would be dead in ten minutes poisoned by his own breath. We can only gain by spending. He that loseth his life shall find it. The molicules we give off with our breath come back to us charged with new energy from the central power house- the sun. The faster we die the more alove we become.

Not all parts wear out equally fast. We get an entirely new skin about once a month. Entirely new set ofmnails about every five or six months. Eyelashes last from 100 to 150 days. The blood changes constantly The slowest changing part is the enamel of our teeth- and that is why we have those two plagues- toothache and dentists.

According to this physical process we are not the same persons we were a few years ago. No man ought to be held to a contract for more than 7 yrs. A man who committed a crime 10 yrs ago can prove his alibi. No man ever celebrates his silver wedding, or even his

tin wedding with the same woman he firwt married. From this materialistic standpoint, the marriage ceremony ought to be performed every 7 yrs in order to keep a couple ~~legally~~ really married. A couple ought to get they married

Now why is it that these things which are true seem to us so absurd? It is because there is a fallacy in the idea. The fallacy of materialism. We know we are the same persons, even tho our bodies do change constantly. In short, the person is quite distinct from his body. We are not attached to the matter of which which our bodies are composed. In the course of a few months or years what was once a part of my body may become a part of your body.

We can now see how foolish the Egyptians were who believed that for a resurrection of an indibidual it was necessary to preserve intact the identical body of the man who died.

We can now see how grossly superstitious and materialistic we so-called Xns are in our treatment of cast-off bodies. We put them in elegant caskets and for as long a time as possible prevent their elements from going back to earth from whence they came.

From the standpoint of the Bible our funeral customs are heathenish; from the standpoint of science they are absurd and injurious; yet in opposition to both Bible and science we cling to the superstitions of materialism.

Our bodies do not belong to us, they are only rented, and we are merely their transitory tenants. Form is more permanent than matte r. The person persists while the body disappears. We at least know that this is true while we live, and we trust that is true when we die. Th dust of the earth is God's modeling clay with which He shapes more and more beautiful forms, throwing none of the clay away, but using it over and over again. Continuously in and out, over and under, ci circly the elements, never at rest, never the same, all bent on the mission appointed them before the creation of the world. Never faltering, never deviating, each atom follows the path thru empty space marked out for it millions of yrs ago; a path so momplex that no mathmamati cian can calculate it for the thousandth part of a second, yet so regular that no variation can be tetected

3. in years. Back and forth wothout stopping moves the shuttle of matter, eternally weaving the living garments of God. No eye can follow its swift movement, no imagination can conceive it, but all that is, is wha what it seems to be.

"As Jacob on his pillow of stone saw in his vision a ladder with angels ascending and descending on it, so we, with our vision clarified by science, can see the atoms as the angels, the messengers of AlmightyGod, ascending and descending thru the scale of life, now carried about by the air, then washed down by the rain, then buried in the soil; then caught up by the hungry rootlets and carried thru the sap and stored in the seed or the fruit; then rising to fuller life in some animal; then caught up and made part in the mechanism of thot and feeling in man; then cast out with the breath to begin again their wanderings; obedient to God's laws whether in high or low estate, equally doing God s service whether in the brain of a philosopher or in the body of a microbe, or buried in a rock, apparently useless and forgotten for thousands of years. So forever, is repeated th miracle of the Garden of Eden when God first formed man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul."

Why Slosson's sermon appealed to me.

1. It reveals God at work in all the processes of nature.
2. It shows forth the wonders of the commonplace.

We ordinarily think of a miracle as an unusual and unnatural act of God. We ordinarily take for granted the natural processes and fail to see their wonders.

We travel far to see the natural wonders of the earth, the rare scenic spots of the world, whereas, if we would only cultivate our sense of appreciation and observe more closely, the near-by places would contain for us scenes and pictures of rare beauty.

Great personages with outstanding personalities, attract us. Whereas, in just the ordinary people with whom we live we can see God if we would.

3. It strengthens my faith in Life and Resurrection and Eternal life.